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ABSTRACT

This document reports on an assessment of the 5-year Arizona Career Ladders Pilot-Test Teacher Incentive Program. Research and evaluation of the program were conducted in the 14 presently participating districts. A model was developed of essential organizational components which must be functioning at healthy levels for effective operation. The components are: (1) focus factors--student achievement and teacher development and leadership; (2) critical support factors--teacher and administrator evaluation, motivation, professional input and ownership, and program designs and structures; and (3) professional networks--state financing and funding, and legislative guidelines. Program participants were asked to complete a survey which assessed their perceptions of the impact and appropriateness of the Career Ladder program in these key organizational areas. A summary of results is presented; charts detail the motivators and demotivators listed on the organizational readiness assessment model. (JD)

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TEACHER MOTIVATION TIED TO FACTORS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS ASSESSMENT MODEL

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Elements of Motivation/De-Motivation Related to Conditions Within School District Organizations

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THE ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS ASSESSMENT MODEL:

Elements of Motivation/De-Motivation Related to Conditions Within School District Organizations

> **Motivation involves inspiration, reason and purpose. Organizations, and the environmental cultures which emerge within them, exhibit varying levels of conditions which dramatically affect an individual's directed energies toward carrying out professional goals.**
>
> ***R. Packard***

Overview

The Organizational Readiness Assessment Model was developed from five years of researching the Arizona Pilot-Test Teacher Incentive Program: Career Ladders. In 1985, the Arizona Legislature established a five-year career ladder pilot program under the direction of the Joint Legislative Committee on Career Ladders (JLCCL). The purpose was to implement a program for rewarding teachers based on actual performance, rather than solely on years of experience and accumulated college credits. Research and evaluation of the program in the 14 presently participating districts is being conducted by the Center for Excellence in Education at NAU in cooperation with researchers from the U of A and ASU. A number of doctoral dissertations are also focusing on various aspects of program implementation.

Research & Evaluation Methodology

Data is collected and compiled annually for the purposes of policy development and legislative refinement. Formal reports are presented to the JLCCL, and results are also fed back to individual districts.

Concepts Crucial to Program Reform

The researchers have developed a model of essential organizational components which must be functioning at healthy levels for effective reform. They consist of *focus factors*, such as student achievement and teacher development & leadership. Critical *support factors* include such components as teacher & administrator evaluation; motivation; professional input & ownership; and program designs & structures. *Essential elements for educational improvement & success* are at the base of the model and include professional networks; state finance & funding; and legislative guidelines. These

individual organizational components need to be assessed as to their current readiness to support an external teacher incentive program within the district. In doing so, each district must address the following issues: (1) Has there been adequate restructuring of all interrelated district components which impact teacher development & student learning? (2) Is teacher performance appropriately assessed? (3) Is the teacher evaluation system perceived as fair & objective?

Data Collection & Analysis

Program participants are asked to complete an annual survey which assesses their perceptions of the impact and appropriateness of the Career Ladder program in key organizational areas. They are also asked to identify program strengths and weaknesses in the form of open-ended questions. Several studies have examined program impact using standardized achievement test scores. Small-group interviews have probed participants' perceptions, attitudes and emotional reactions to the effects of the program upon their academic, interpersonal and organizational activities. In addition, a "profiling" procedure has been developed which diagrammatically shows the current "level of operational health" of each organizational component, thereby indicating overall district readiness for program implementation.

Summary of Program Results

The following are the major findings:

1. School district organizations show extreme diversity with respect to current capabilities to implement such reform efforts successfully & efficiently. They differ dramatically in their needs for outside assistance in making improvements and capacity to demonstrate accountability for program goals.

2. A comprehensive restructuring of the total school district organization may be necessary in order to integrate the components which critically impact teacher development & related student achievement. Each district needs to be assessed & profiled to determine its current readiness level.

3. Successfully restructured districts have increased their impact on student learning potentials by more than 150% after CL implementation. Their impact on student achievement is over 225% greater than that of non-CL districts in the state.

4. A critical barrier to successful educational reform is the difficulty of "Transfer of Knowledge" into policy. That is, we need to know: "What level of thinking is used by educational & legislative decision makers in developing and implementing policy for improving schools?"

5. There are great concerns expressed by teachers about factors affecting morale within school systems. Perceptions of isolation & authoritarian control are especially evident. Negative influences operating within schools have affected organizational climate, psychological environment and internal communication procedures.

Level of Teacher Motivation Depends on the Developmental Readiness of the Total Organization and Its Essential Elements

System Readiness to Motivate. To become effective organizations which have the greatest impact on positive teacher development and motivation, districts must recognize the necessity of *developing total school system readiness.* Teachers who are just coming out of colleges and facing the realities of educational systems need to realize that school districts differ greatly in their suitability as places to work. Many new teachers have the idea that "schools are schools;" that is, they all provide an equally supportive environment for development of teaching skills and effective student learning. This is not true!

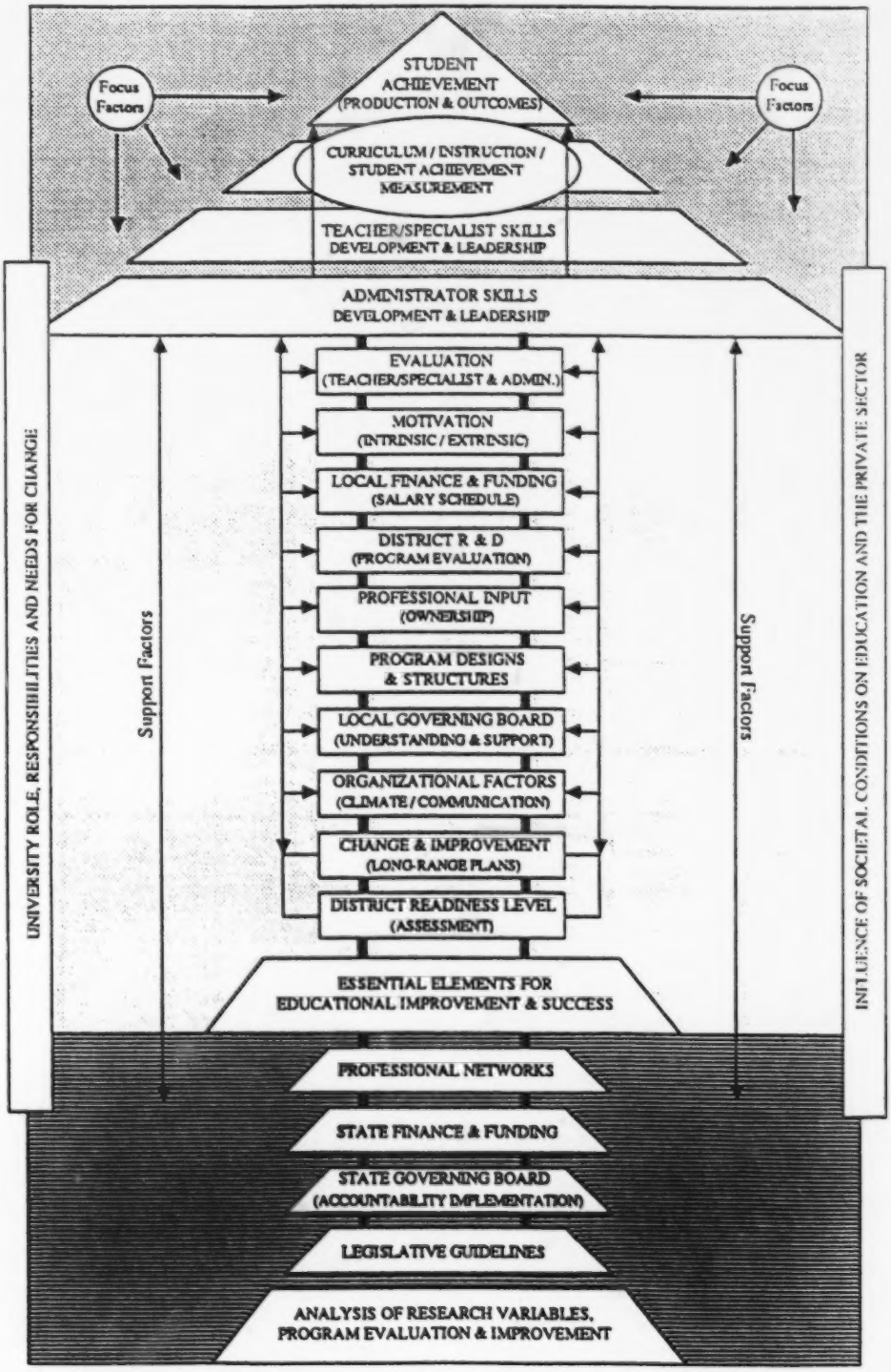
Districts are extremely unequal (*between school systems*) in their organizational capabilities and resources to impact teacher motivation and the development of student learning potentials (A holistic model of interrelated components affecting motivation appears on the following page). In addition, organizational components (*within school systems*) exhibit varying capabilities and levels of resources to impact positively all school goals, including motivation of personnel to perform at a high level. One inappropriately functioning component or negative factor can anchor and drag the others down, thereby keeping them from attaining the institutional goals (An example of assessing and profiling within-district elements appears on pages 5-6).

The matrix tables beginning on p. 7 depict these interrelated organizational factors and identify the specific motivators and de-motivators affecting each one. School systems, individual schools within a district and departments or grade level areas within schools all vary in the types and amounts of existing motivational and de-motivational conditions.

Figure 2

MAPPING THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS
FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL REFORM:

Designs and Structures


STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (PRODUCTION & OUTCOMES)
Focus Factors
Focus Factors
CURRICULUM / INSTRUCTION / STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT MEASUREMENT
TEACHER/SPECIALIST SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP
ADMINISTRATOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP
EVALUATION (TEACHER/SPECIALIST & ADMIN.)
MOTIVATION (INTRINSIC / EXTRINSIC)
LOCAL FINANCE & FUNDING (SALARY SCHEDULE)
DISTRICT R & D (PROGRAM EVALUATION)
PROFESSIONAL INPUT (OWNERSHIP)
PROGRAM DESIGNS & STRUCTURES
LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD (UNDERSTANDING & SUPPORT)
ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS (CLIMATE / COMMUNICATION)
CHANGE & IMPROVEMENT (LONG-RANGE PLANS)
DISTRICT READINESS LEVEL (ASSESSMENT)
ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT & SUCCESS
PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS
STATE FINANCE & FUNDING
STATE GOVERNING BOARD (ACCOUNTABILITY IMPLEMENTATION)
LEGISLATIVE GUIDELINES
ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH VARIABLES, PROGRAM EVALUATION & IMPROVEMENT
Support Factors
Support Factors
UNIVERSITY ROLE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND NEEDS FOR CHANGE
INFLUENCE OF SOCIETAL CONDITIONS ON EDUCATION AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

A Model of Interrelated Components of Program Support and Focus for Effecting Change and Reform in Education

Figure 4

DISTRICT READINESS PROFILE OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

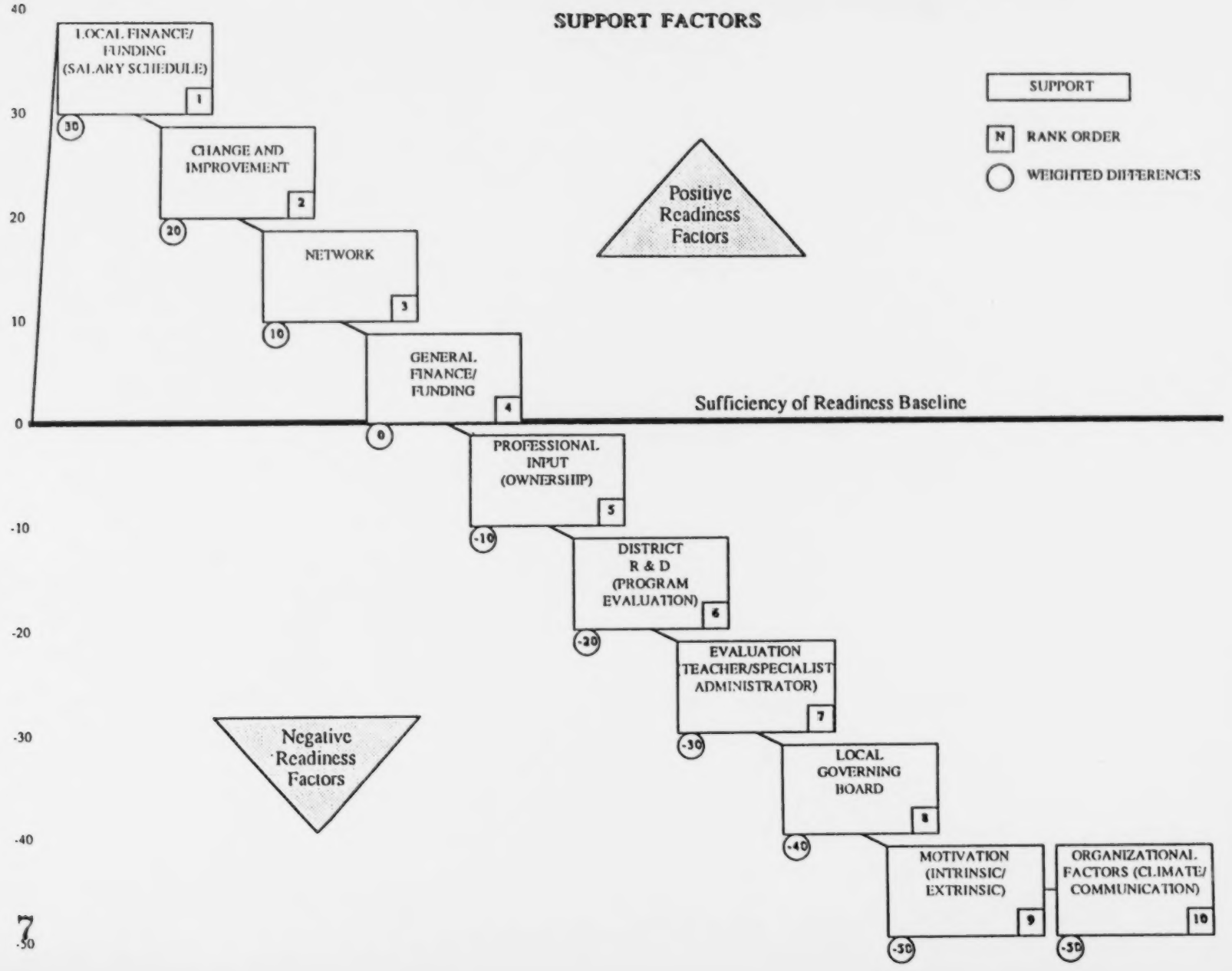
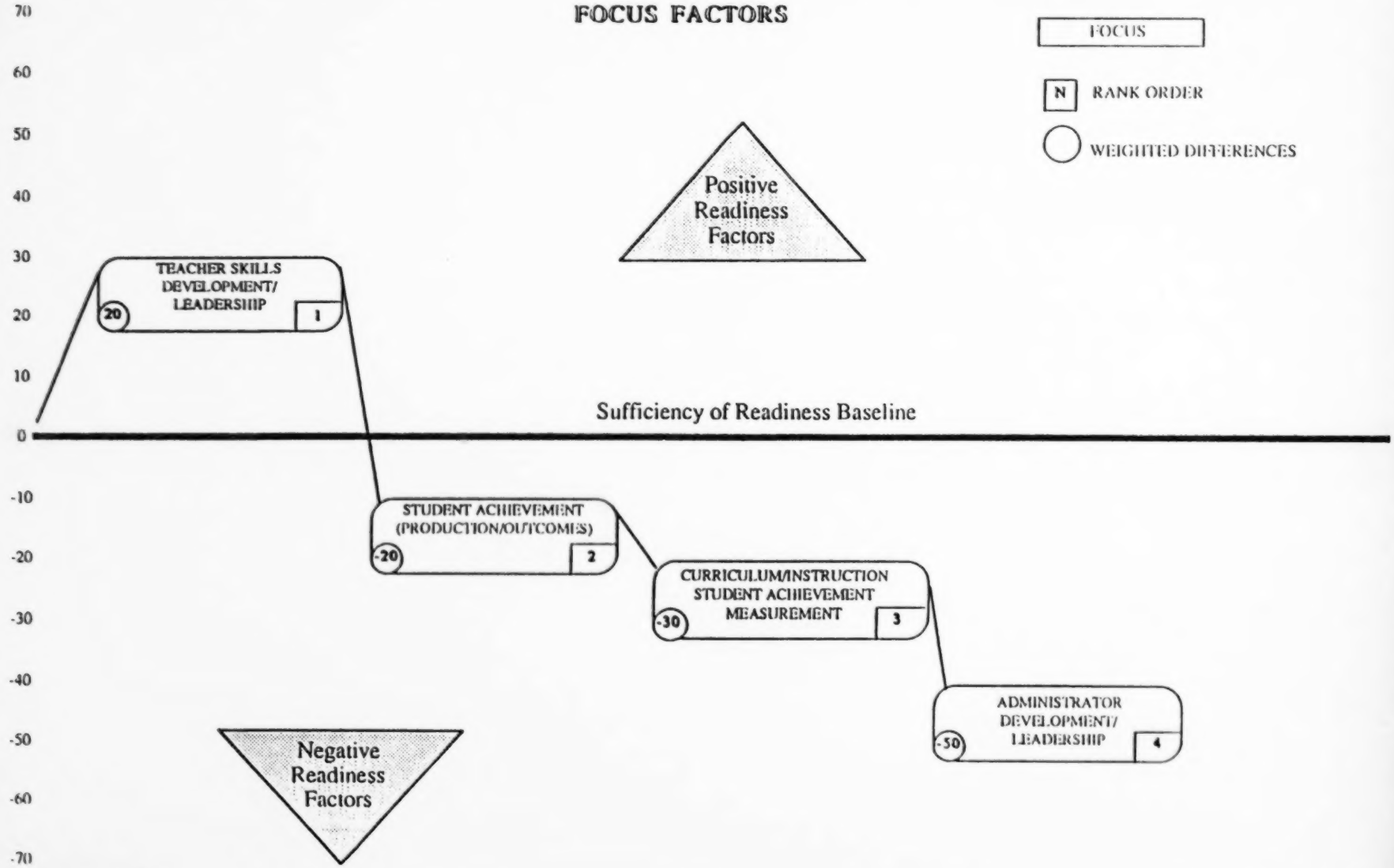


Figure 5

DISTRICT READINESS PROFILE OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES



MOTIVATORS & DE-MOTIVATORS:
ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS ASSESSMENT MODEL

FACTOR	MOTIVATOR(S)	DE-MOTIVATOR(S)
Student Achievement: Production & Outcomes	* Increased teacher ability to demonstrate accountability by learning to calculate/assess pre-post test gain scores using appropriate statistical/qualitative procedures * Opportunities to develop own tests/measures which are most appropriate to each teacher's subject area & current ability level(s) of students	* Lack of objectives tailored to individual teacher & student needs/abilities/subject area(s) * Failure to consider explicitly & incorporate principles of human growth & development (e.g., tracking the social & emotional, as well as the academic, growth of students) in setting objectives * Haphazard approach to assessing individual teacher gains (no systematic long-range plans for tracking performance) * Reliance on outdated/inapplicable standards (e.g., national norms which do not adequately reflect local conditions)
Curriculum/Instruction/ Student Achievement Measurement	* Greater focus on: a) higher levels & quality of academic content b) improved teacher skill levels c) variety & scope of related teaching methods & instructional strategies * Ongoing curriculum alignment focused on well-articulated district learning objectives * Satisfaction experienced by greater teacher input into such curriculum alignment	* Lack of valid, well-articulated & aligned curriculum for local objectives and conditions * Failure to consider explicitly & incorporate principles of human growth & development (e.g., tracking the social & emotional, as well as the academic, growth of students) in setting objectives * Lack of encouragement of innovation in local instructional practices * Failure to apply & learn the latest multimethod (qualitative & quantitative) technological procedures for measuring student progress & teacher accountability for that progress

MOTIVATORS & DE-MOTIVATORS:
(Page 2, Cont'd)

FACTOR	MOTIVATOR(S)	DE-MOTIVATOR(S)
Teacher/Specialist Skills Development & Leadership	* Emergence of "teacher leaders" * Greater amounts of: a) inservice b) mentoring c) peer coaching d) general skills development * Increased emphasis on proper planning * Focus on improved interpersonal & communication skills * Equal emphasis on principles of human growth & development, along with academic content	* Inadequate inservice focused on teacher skills development/leadership * Failure to recognize role & importance of "instructional specialists" (e.g., librarians, counselors) as equally important professionals to student growth & development * Lack of encouragement of innovation in local instructional practices
Administrator Skills Development & Leadership	* Shared decision-making between administrators & teacher-leaders * Greater administrator awareness of day-to-day classroom activities * Ongoing inservice opportunities for administrators * More opportunities for "hands-on" involvement by administrators in student achievement assessment, evaluation planning & implementation	* Failure to include administrator input into decisions concerning teacher incentive programs such as Career Ladders (e.g., participation in the evaluation process) * Failure to provide adequate inservice & other reliable information about the workings/objectives of such programs to school & district administrators
Evaluation (Teachers/Specialists & Administrators)	* Development of more objective & specific evaluation procedures * Greater input from teachers & administrators into the formulation & implementation of the evaluation process * Resulting increased perception of "fairness" of evaluation system * Improved training procedures for evaluators relative to implementing the evaluation procedures which have been developed	* Failure to develop valid & reliable evaluation procedures which are perceived as "fair & objective" by those being evaluated; e.g., authoritarian and/or haphazard approaches to evaluation * Failure to include teacher & administrator input into the development & refinement of such an evaluation system * Using evaluation criteria which, while perhaps "measurable," do not adequately measure key aspects of student achievement & teacher accountability (e.g., process evaluation only; or "cookbook" approaches to assessing teacher performance)
Motivation (Intrinsic & Extrinsic)	* Increased sense of professionalism * Increased pride in being able to demonstrate accountability * Increased satisfaction with teacher development & professional growth opportunities (e.g., inservice, mentoring, other teacher-leadership activities) * Greater opportunities for earning increased financial incentives (in addition to the traditional criteria of years of experience & accumulated college credits to date)	* Inadequate opportunities for teachers to experience the satisfactions of such intrinsic rewards as "increased professionalism, leadership," etc., by not providing sufficient inservice, mentoring & related professional growth activities * Distribution of monetary incentives in a way which is perceived as "unfair & not objective" (e.g., not based on having a well-developed & valid evaluation process, as described above), thereby engendering jealousies & other dysfunctional reactions * Having an overall reward system in place (for both intrinsic & extrinsic rewards) which is perceived as authoritarian

MOTIVATORS & DE-MOTIVATORS
(Page 3, Cont'd)

FACTOR	MOTIVATOR(S)	DE-MOTIVATOR(S)
Local Finance & Funding (Salary Schedule)	* More equitable distribution of available funds * Greater proportion of budgeted amounts going directly to teachers recognized as top performers (e.g., designing & implementing a true "performance-based" approach to salary structure) * Ability to adjust allocation/distribution of funds to meet specific & unique local conditions (e.g., special circumstances related to teacher recruitment & retention)	* Poor fiscal budgeting practices (e.g., underestimation of costs and /or overestimation of revenues received) * Automatically allocating entire amounts received for "increased teacher salaries," while making little/no provision for such necessary expenditures as "development of local R & D unit" or "consultant assistance to acquire technology to measure student achievement validly"
District Research & Development (Program Evaluation)	* Development of "own," locally based R & D unit(s) on the district level * As a result, increased opportunities to plan & conduct locally based research studies in areas such as the following: a) student achievement b) teacher accountability c) effectiveness of local instructional practices d) issues of teacher morale, turnover, etc.	* Failure to establish own local R & D unit * Failure to budget sufficient funds to begin and continue local research and development activities * Failure to apply & learn the latest multimethod (qualitative & quantitative) technological procedures in research & development activities * Lack of encouragement of innovation & initiative with respect to local R & D projects
Professional Input (Ownership)	* Ongoing & reliable channels of direct teacher input into decision making which directly affects them (e.g., policy development)	* Little/no opportunity for participative management (input from teachers & administrators into day-to-day decision making which directly affects them) * As a result, not capitalizing on the inherent satisfactions & intrinsic rewards of "being listened to" * Poor channels of communication regarding such decisions (e.g., lack of timely, relevant, & reliable information dissemination to all affected parties)
Program Designs & Structures	* Focus on "excellence in instruction" in recognition/reward system * Encouragement of innovation in teaching methods & other opportunities for teacher leadership (e.g., mentoring, inservice, assisting with curriculum alignment) * Designing rules & regulations "with teachers' needs in mind" * Greater financial "stewardship" & related demonstration of account-ability for the public trust (e.g., concern for realizing maximal tangible benefits in exchange for program dollars received & expended)	* Lack of consideration of local conditions & circumstances in developing own rules & guidelines for program participation (too much rigidity in program designs & structures; over-reliance on existing rules & regulations elsewhere which may not take into account unique local conditions) * Little/no opportunity for participative management (input from teachers & administrators into day-to-day decision making which directly affects them) * Failure to consider overall system readiness (e.g., by applying diagnostic multimethod technologic procedures such as "profiling") in developing and/or revising program designs & structures

MOTIVATORS & DE-MOTIVATORS
(Page 4, Cont'd)

FACTOR	MOTIVATOR(S)	DE-MOTIVATOR(S)
Local Governing Board	* Active desire by Board members to learn more about teacher-incentive programs such as Career Ladders * Enhanced interpersonal relationships & improved channels of communication among Board members, administrators & teachers	* Little/no attempts to provide local governing board with information related to external reform programs, such as Career Ladders, prior to their implementation * Little/no opportunity provided to board for participative management (input into day-to-day decision making concerning program administration & implementation)
Organizational Factors (Climate & Communication)	* Improved multi-directional ("top-down & bottom-up") channels of communication within the entire organizational structure * Availability of timely, relevant & dependable information for decision-making to all affected parties in the organizational hierarchy (all teachers, administrators & support staff) * Satisfaction with perception of increased input into decision making & applying one's own perspective & expertise to policy development * A related sense of "being listened to" * More effective procedures for managing conflict, thereby reducing stress & other dysfunctional consequences	* Repressive, authoritarian psychological & interpersonal environment (e.g., fostering of jealousies & rivalries) * Poor channels of communication (e.g., information filtering & distortion) * Corresponding perception by members of "not being listened to"
Change & Improvement (Long-Range Plans)	* Greater overall focus on curriculum alignment * Use of the latest technological procedures/methods for establishing reliability & validity of the tests & measures used in the district * Greater concern for teacher skills development, evaluation & improvement	* Failure to develop adequate long-run strategic plans (e.g., haphazard, "seat-of-the-pants," "fighting fires" type of day-to-day decision making) * "Too far to go -- & don't know how to get there" * Failure to budget sufficient funds to begin and continue local research & development activities & other necessary start-up expenditures for long-range strategic planning & implementation * Failure to acquire & incorporate the latest multimethod technological procedures for long-range planning, evaluation & implementation
District Readiness Level (Assessment)	* Application of "profiling" procedure to assess current level(s) of operational health of each critical organizational support & focus factor, especially prior to initiation of external reform programs such as Career Ladders * Using results of profiling to initiate remedial processes/procedures to improve those support & focus factors which may be currently below par * Ongoing evaluation/profiling of each individual component with respect to its functioning & readiness for overall program goals such as improved student achievement & teacher accountability	* "Impulsively" adopting external reform programs such as "Career Ladders," without consideration of system readiness to implement such outside programs * Failure to apply appropriate diagnostic multimethod technological procedures such as "profiling" in order to assess current readiness level(s) of entire organization & its various components

FACTOR	MOTIVATOR(S)	DE-MOTIVATOR(S)
Professional Networks	* Greater sharing of experiences, ideas & solutions to potential problems among program participants * Satisfaction with increased opportunities for communication * Fostering a resulting sense of "cooperation, vs. competition" perceived by program participants * Greater opportunities for networking with other existing organizations & groups (e.g., professional teacher associations)	* Failure to provide an ongoing mechanism for other program participants to meet & exchange information & ideas relative to program implementation * Resulting "competition, vs. cooperation" among these participating districts * Corresponding failure to capitalize on the natural intrinsic rewards of network members meeting, communicating & sharing their ideas/experiences
State Finance & Funding	* Increased communication between legislators & program participants * As a result, development of legislation which "strikes the proper balance" between structure & flexibility regarding unique local conditions	* Poor fiscal budgeting practices (e.g., underestimation of costs and/or overestimation of revenues received) * Automatically allocating entire amounts received for "increased teacher salaries," while making little/no provision for such necessary expenditures as "development of local R & D unit" or "consultant assistance to acquire technology to measure student achievement validly"
State Governing Board (Accountability/ Implementation)	* Increased communication betwen legislators & program participants * As a result, development of legislation which "strikes the proper balance" between structure & flexibility regarding unique local conditions	* Possible development of solidified, bureaucratic & excessively rigid/authoritarian structure for rule-making * Correspondingly, little/no consideration for unique local conditions which would necessitiate some flexibility in legislation * Little/no incentive for innovation & incorporation of new ideas * Non-existent/poor channels of communication between legislators & representatives of participating districts
Legislative Guidelines	* Increased communication between legislators & program participants * As a result, development of legislation which "strikes the proper balance" between structure & flexibility regarding unique local conditions	* Possible development of solidified, bureaucratic & excessively rigid/authoritarian structure for rule-making * Correspondingly, little/no consideration for unique local conditons which would necessitate some flexibility in legislation * Little/no incentive for innovation & incorporation of new ideas * Non-existent/poor channels of communication between legislators & representatives of participating districts

FACTOR	MOTIVATOR(S)	DE-MOTIVATOR(S)
Analysis of Research Variables, Program Evaluation & Improvement	* Application of "profiling" procedure to assist current level(s) of operational health of each critical organizational support & focus factor, especially prior to initiation of external reform programs such as Career Laders * Using results of profiling to initiate remedial processes/procedures to improve those support & focus factors which may be currently below par * Ongoing evaluation/profiling of each individual component with respect to its functioning & readiness for overall program goals such as improved student achievement & teacher accountability * Procedures for incorporating other new multimethod technology into evaluation & local R & D activities * Ongoing & reliable channels of direct teacher input into decision making which directly affects them (e.g., policy development) * Increased opportunities to plan & conduct locally based research studies in areas such as the following: a) student achievement b) teacher accountability c) effectiveness of local instructional practices d) issues of teacher morale, turnover, etc.	* Inadequate research base (decisions not based on timely, relevant & reliable data resulting from application of latest multimethod quantitative & qualitative assessment procedures) * Failure to develop adequate long-run strategic plans (e.g., haphazard, "seat-of-the-pants," "fighting fires" type of day-to-day decision making) * "Too far to go -- & don't know how to get there" * Failure to apply diagnostic/remedial "profiling" procedure to correct inadequacies within the organizational structure & to initiate corrective improvement activities * Failure to acquire & incorporate other current multimethod technological procedures for long-range planning, evaluation & implementation * Little/no incentive for innovation & incorporation of new ideas * Failure to incorporate direct input from administrators, teachers & other personnel affected by the program into its day-to-day planning, implementation & evaluation activities * Failure to develop valid & reliable evaluation procedures which are perceived as "fair & objective" by those being evaluated; e.g., authoritarian and/or haphazard approaches to evaluation * Failure to include teacher & administrator input into the development & refinement of such an evaluation system * Using evaluation criteria which, while perhaps "measurable," do not adequately measure key aspects of student achievement & teacher accountability (e.g., process evaluation only; or "cookbook" approaches to assessing teacher performance)